

Mr. Patrick Lizon
Washington State Department of Ecology
Water Quality Program
P.O. Box 47600, Olympia, WA 98504-7600

Dear Mr. Lizon:

The White Salmon Irrigation District is submitting comments on your proposed category 5 temperature listing for Buck Creek (Listing ID21594). The district feels it is important to apprise you of the changing conditions in the White Salmon Basin since the most recent data was collected.

In October of 2011 Condit Dam was breached returning the White Salmon to a free flowing natural river. This has since reintroduced anadromous salmonid species into Buck Creek. The Irrigation district has a 90 year diversion on Buck Creek and a dam that does not currently allow for fish passage. We are currently working with the Underwood Conservation District, Yakama Nation, Department of Ecology, Department of Natural Resources, Klickitat County, and the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office to bring the dam into compliance with fish passage requirements. We request that due to this hydrographic limitation that the reaches remain separate and distinct as is shown in the 2012 spatial extent until such time that the dam is in full fish compliance.

We further request that the designated use for Buck Creek remain as a 17.5C stream for Salmonid Spawning, Rearing, and Migration until such time as Ecology allows data from October 2011 and onward into the allowed dataset for Buck Creek. The removal of Condit Dam has significantly altered the hydrography, and habitat of the White Salmon River.

The White Salmon Irrigation District will not oppose the lowering of stream temperature to 16C for Core Summer Salmonid Habitat during the next assessment so long as data from October 2011 and onward is the only accepted data.

The Irrigation District requests that you remand Buck Creek into two segments and the listing be changed to Category 3. We fully realize and understand the immensity of your undertaking with this project and applaud your efforts. We the district feel the special circumstances with the removal of one of the largest fish passage barriers in history warrants further consideration and review in this matter.

Lastly, we are aware that the Water temperature gauging station WQ-2 was washed away with the breaching of Condit Dam. This puts into question the reliability and quality of all of the data taken from this station. The potential influence from the inundation of Northwestern Lake compromises the Quality Assurance that gives the ecology assessment credence.

Thank you for your time and effort into further looking into this matter.

Stan Trout
Chairman
White Salmon Irrigation District